

REMARKS

This preliminary amendment is being filed concurrently with a continuation application of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/131,275, filed August 10, 1998. Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 6-10 have been amended, and claims 15 through 25 have been added. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. Applicant hereby claims small entity status.

The amendment to claim 1 is supported in the specification at p. 2, line 24 to p. 3, line 2. New claims 15 and 16 are supported in the specification at p. 3, lines 6-7 and p. 3, line 8, respectively. New claims 17 and 18 are supported in the specification at p. 5, lines 11-12 and p. 5, lines 7-10, respectively. New claims 19 and 20 are supported by originally filed claim 8. New claims 21, 22, 23 and 24 are supported in the specification at p. 6, lines 1-2, lines 2-20, lines 2-15, and lines 20-22, respectively.

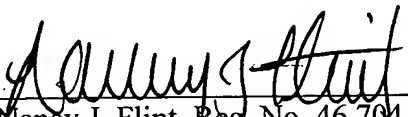
It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct that amount of \$602.00 to cover the basic filing fee plus additional claims fee. It is believed that no other fees are due in connection with the filing of this Continuation application. However, if it is determined

otherwise, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the undersigned's Deposit
Account No. 50-0206. Please note that the Attorney Docket Number is 63130.000009.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 15, 2004


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